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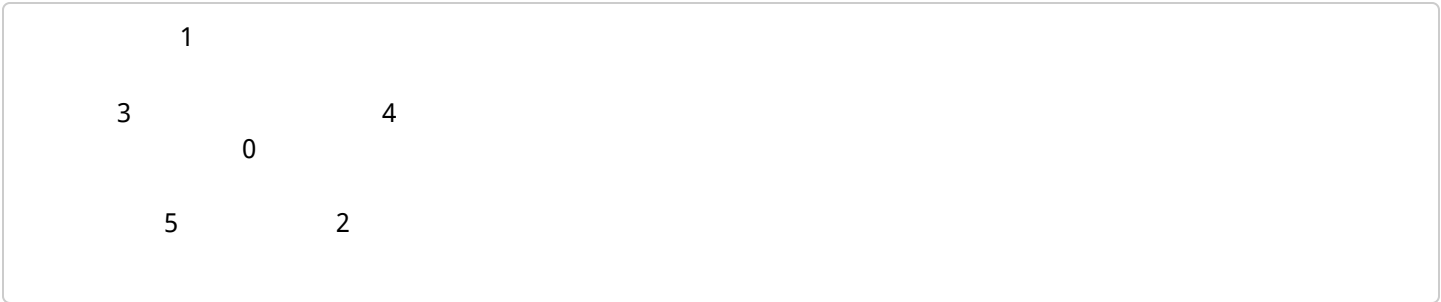
Full Deck Tarot Star Spread

Unicornis

There are very few Tarot spreads which use the entire deck in a single unified pattern. What follows is a description of such a spread. It is best suited for situations in which a great deal of complexity is present, and for 'general' readings. The steps for creating the spread are:

1: Thoroughly shuffle the deck until it 'feels' right. While I personably do not allow another person to shuffle my cards, if the reading concerns another it is acceptable to allow that person to hold the deck while concentrating upon the matter in question. This is a personal preference, but I am convinced that the relationship between reader and deck is a very personal one and that contact with the deck by another may 'confuse' the reading.

2: Dealing from the 'bottom' of the deck (i.e. with the cards face down and dealing from the topmost position), create thirteen piles of six cards each. The first pile is in the center and the other twelve are in a circle around it. Each pile should be dealt consecutively (all six cards at once). Although it is not necessary to actually place them so, at least understand that the first card dealt in a pile (Card 0) is in the center of a circle of five cards (Card 1 through Card 5). This circle is, in actuality, a Star. When laying them out in a Star, use the following spread for each pile:



Note that if you trace the numbers from 1 to 5 you will trace a five-pointed star, always moving clockwise around the circle to reach the next point.

3: Interpret the spread. Interpretation of this spread is based upon the astrological symbolism of the twelve houses. The first pile of cards in the circle of twelve piles is House 1, the second is House 2, etc.

The individual piles delineate the specific factors at work in each of the twelve basic areas. Card 1 represents the matter in question (the 'problem', question, etc.). Card 2 represents the 'source' (cause of the problem, inception of a project, etc.). Card 3 represents factors which bear upon the matter, but which are external to it (and probably out of the control of the querant). Card 4 represents actions taken with regard to the matter. Card 5 represents the outcome of those actions. Card 4 is the most difficult to interpret, since 'action' could here represent several different things. First of all, it might represent an action which has already been taken. If so, then Card 5 will represent the probable outcome, unless counter actions are taken. Secondly, it might represent the action which the querant is asking about (i.e. 'Should I'. Card 5, again, represents the probable outcome. Thirdly, it might represent the suggested course of action (answer to the question 'What should I'). In this case, Card 5 is the suggested goal. It is quite possible that Card 5 will relate to a past outcome (i.e. everything has already transpired). If this seems to be the case, then it is possible that all five cards must be interpreted as relating to another person, instead of the querant. Most of the time the sense of Card 4 should be apparent from the context of the reading.

Card 0 always represents the 'heart' of the individual Star spread. Usually, this relates to the querant's own relationship to the matter which is germane to the house in question. It can also, however, represent the underlying ('behind the scenes') factors which precipitated the matter, not to be confused with the 'cause' of a problem. In this sense, it will usually represent motivations, rather than actions. In some cases Card 0 will represent a person, other the querant, to which the Star actually relates. In such a case, an attempt should be made, based upon the situation and the nature of the card to identify that person, since this implies that the matter is either out of the hands of the querant or the querant is only an 'ambient' factor (and will then be represented by Card 3 for that particular Star.

In a similar manner, Pile 0 (the one at the center of the circle), represents the 'heart' of the entire reading. This will always pertain to the reasons (motivations) of the querant, and interpretation of this Star spread must be used to modify all of the others.

This is not the place to delve into the meanings of the twelve houses in detail. There are many good books in print which deal with this. I highly recommend the following, which give excellent interpretations of the twelve astrological houses (coinciding with the twelve 'Stars' of this Tarot spread):

The Astrological Houses: The Spectrum of Individual Experience by Dane Rudhyar

The Astrology of Personality by Dane Rudhyar

A Handbook for the Humanistic Astrologer by Michael R. Meyer

The full deck star spread lends itself admirably to an in-depth study of any matter. The human condition is far too complex to use a simple yes-no approach to any matter of importance. More so than spreads which involve only a small number of the total factors which could come into play, the full deck star spread allows detailed analysis of all of the options and avenues which are available. It will also show how the outcome of an action might affect areas of the querant's life which were not specifically part of the reason for consulting the Tarot in the first place.

It might take a little longer to use, and might require a little more effort on the part of the interpreter, but the extra work will be repaid many-fold in the certainty that no stone was left unturned.

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